

# Indiana House of Representatives

## News and Information

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### **CROOKS: LOCAL RESIDENT OFFERS SAFER, QUIETER RAIL CROSSING WARNING SYSTEM**

INDIANAPOLIS – A Daviess County resident today proposed the state of Indiana consider installation of a new railroad crossing warning system that will improve safety and reduce noise pollution, according to State Rep. Dave Crooks (D-Washington).

At Crooks' urging, Chad Pfitzer from Washington gave a presentation on the benefits of a wayside horn system at railroad crossings to members of the Rail Corridor Safety Committee, a group of lawmakers that studies the subject with an eye toward proposing legislation in the next session of the Indiana General Assembly. Pfitzer was joined by Rick Mooney, representing a railroad safety consulting firm.

"When Chad first talked to me about this system, it seemed to me to be the answer to many of the problems that plague places like Washington and Daviess County," Crooks said. "I asked that he talk about the wayside horn system before an interim study committee because I believe it offers benefits that can reduce accidents, fatalities and injuries and cut down on noise problems."

The wayside horn is mounted at railroad crossings, rather than on a locomotive. The horn is activated as the train nears the crossing.

"This horn delivers a longer, louder, more consistent warning to motorists and pedestrians," Pfitzer said. "At present, the warning that a train is coming is made by the locomotive, which often sounds its horn continuously as it moves through the community. This generates many noise complaints from neighborhoods because there is no let up on the horn, even though the train has moved beyond a crossing and there is no risk of danger.

"With the wayside horn system, the focal point is on the railroad crossings in front of the train, rather than those that already have been cleared," he continued. "Motorists will have ample warning about oncoming trains, and the noises will be substantially reduced."

Pfitzer and Crooks noted that wayside horns have been installed in a number of states, including Illinois, Iowa, California and Texas.

"I know that people in Washington get frustrated when the train starts blowing its whistle in the middle of the night as it travels through the city," Crooks said. "I think this system offers a balance that protects motorists and reduces noise pollution, and I believe it is an option that must be discussed at the state level."

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